

Watervliet Arsenal  
South Carriage Storehouse  
(Building 22, Fire Station)  
Westervelt Avenue east of the intersection  
of Westervelt Avenue and Buffington Street  
Watervliet  
Albany County  
New York

HAER No. NY-1H

HAER  
NY  
1-WAYL  
1/22-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HAER  
NY,  
1-WAVL,  
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# HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

WATERVLIET ARSENAL  
SOUTH CARRIAGE STOREHOUSE  
(Building 22, Fire Station)  
HAER No. NY-1H

Location: Westervelt Avenue east of the intersection of  
Westervelt Avenue and Buffington Street,  
Watervliet Arsenal,  
Watervliet,  
Albany County, New York.  
UTM: 18.605849.4730220  
Quad: Troy South

Date of Construction: Probably 1839.

Present Owner and Occupant: U.S. Army.

Present Use: Fire station, family housing

Significance: One of two similar structures apparently built in  
1839 as carriage storehouses, this building  
represents one of the few remaining vestiges of  
carriage making and storage, an important element  
of nineteenth-century manufacture at the arsenal.

Historian: Barbara E. Hightower, February 1985.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The building was probably built in 1839. In a May 10, 1841 letter to the Ordnance Department, the arsenal's commander, Major Rufus L. Baker, mentioned a brick structure erected in 1839 (Kyle, p. 97). Known as the south carriage storehouse, its location and measurements (185' x 36') correspond to Building 22 before it was enlarged in 1918. The building appears on the 1845 map of the arsenal (HAER Photo No. NY-1A-79) and is identified as the south carriage store on the 1863 map (HAER Photo No. NY-1A-80).
2. Architect: Not known. The building was probably designed by Ordnance Department personnel.
3. Original and subsequent owners: U.S. Army
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known.
5. Original plans and construction: No original plans or drawings were located. The 1845 and 1863 maps show a rectangular, gable-roofed structure with its ridgeline oriented east-west. An intersecting gable was situated at the center of the building on the south side.
6. Alterations and additions: Prior to 1918, the building appears to have retained its original configuration and size. Alterations were limited primarily to windows and doors.

In 1918 a 51' x 36' 5" addition was made to the east end of the building to house a quartermaster storehouse. The addition was constructed of old lumber left over from previous construction and brick salvaged from other structures or stockpiles on the arsenal (Completion Report, p. 10). The addition's design was compatible with the original structure and appears to have repeated the fenestration pattern of the original east end. Plans for the addition are in the arsenal's Engineering Division. Around 1960, the addition was converted to family housing.

B. Historical Context:

This building is one of two similar structures, known as the south (Building 22) and north (Building 15, HAER No. NY-1I) carriage storehouses, apparently erected at the arsenal in 1839. The 1845 and 1863 maps, the arsenal's 1910 historical report, and drawings in the

Engineering Division indicate that the building remained a storehouse at least through 1918, when it was extended with an addition on the east side. By 1920 the building housed the arsenal's fire department. The fire department remains in the building, and since about 1960 the east addition has served as family housing. (For further documentation see HAER No. NY-1A.)

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: While utilitarian, this one-story, gable-roofed brick structure exhibits an attention to architectural detailing in the use of pilasters and the central gabled pavilion.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is generally in good condition and is well maintained.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The original section of this rectangular, one-story building is 180' 6" (south) x 36' 5" with a slightly projecting pavilion 44' wide at the center of its south elevation. The 1918 addition at the east end is 51' x 36' 5". The basement extends only under the addition.
2. Foundations: The foundation of the original section is rubblestone. The addition foundation is concrete.
3. Walls: All walls are red brick laid in 5/1 common bond. Brick pilasters accent the corners of the pavilion and the building on the north and south elevations.
4. Structural system, framing: Walls are load bearing approximately 16" thick. The roof is supported by heavy timber trusses (HAER Photo No. NY-1H-4).
5. Porches: A set of nine concrete steps with metal pipe railing lead to the quarters entrance on the north side of the building. A metal awning covers the doorway.
6. Ventilators: Two large, round, metal ventilators straddle the ridge west of the pavilion.

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7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: A large, rectangular, glazed wood overhead door is centered in the pavilion. Also on the south elevation are glazed metal personnel doors located east and west of the pavilion. Both are set under brick segmental-arch lintels. Glazed metal folding doors provide access to the garage on the west end. Access to the quarters on the north elevation is a paneled glazed wood door set under a two-light transom.
- b. Windows: Typical windows are two-over-two-light, double-hung wood sash with concrete or stone lug sills and brick segmental-arch lintels. Half-round openings with brick surrounds and stone lug sills are in the south and east gable ends. The east opening contains a fan-shaped wood louver, and the south opening is covered with a wood panel. The west gable end contains metal-louvers in a rectangular opening.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gabled roof is covered with asphalt shingles. A second gable above the pavilion intersects the main roof on the south elevation.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The cornice has boxed eaves with metal and wood soffits and returns in the gable ends.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: The basement, entered on the north, contains three interconnected rooms on the north and two rooms and a vault which open off an L-shaped hall on the south. (See supplemental material, floor plan)
- b. Ground floor: The door to the quarters on the north leads to a short hall with the dining area and living room on the left and the kitchen on the right. A second hall intersects on the right providing access to two bedrooms on the left and a bathroom on the right. The remainder of the building contains a garage entered through the west end, restrooms, a switch board room, an open shop area at the center, and a hall providing access to a lunch room, kitchen, offices, sleeping area, and locker and class rooms along the north and south walls. (See supplemental material, floor plan)

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2. Flooring: The basement, garage, and shop floors are concrete. Remaining floors are concrete covered with linoleum.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Basement partition walls are beaded wood paneling, and the vault has brick walls. Ceilings are dry wall.

On the ground floor, garage walls are exposed brick. Remaining walls are either plaster, dry wall, or paneling. The garage area has a pressed metal ceiling composed of small squares with a border containing curvilinear forms encircled by an egg and dart cove molding. Remaining ceilings are accoustical tile.

4. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Doors are either glazed metal or wood personnel set in plain frames.
  - b. Windows: Windows are set in plain wood frames.
5. Mechanical equipment:
  - a. Heating, air conditioning: The building is heated by steam and cooled by window air conditioners.
  - b. Lighting: Fluorescent ceiling fixtures provide lighting for the interior.
  - c. Plumbing: Plumbing fixtures are modern.
  - d. Machinery: An alarm system, located on the south wall of the garage, was installed in the building in 1942 (HAER Photo No. NY-1H-5). In case of a fire, it receives a signal from the affected station. Holes are then punched into a strip of paper identifying the location of the fire. The building also contains a telephone switchboard built in 1947 and installed in the switchboard room in 1951.

D. Site:

The building faces south onto Westervelt Avenue between Arnold Lane on the east and Buffington Street on the west. The arsenal's industrial area, composed of buildings erected since the 1880s, lies to the south and west. Small-scale community facility, family housing, and maintenance structures are situated to the north and east of the building.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural Drawings:

Quartermaster Storehouse Addition. 1918. 5 sheets, includes plans, elevations, and sections. Watervliet Arsenal Engineering Division.

B. Early Views:

View taken from the roof of the barracks (Building 24) looking northwest toward the Seacoast and Field and Siege Gun Shops. 1910. Watervliet Arsenal Museum. (HAER Photo No. NY-1A-82)

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Stephenson, F. J. "Historical Sketch of Watervliet Arsenal." Watervliet, New York: Watervliet Arsenal, July 1, 1910. Record Group 156, Records of the Office of the Chief of Ordnance, Entry 30025-D, Subentry 227. Navy and Old Army Branch, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Lists the building's use in 1910.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Building Technology, Inc. Historic Properties Report Watervliet Arsenal, Watervliet, New York and Rotterdam Family Housing Area, Rotterdam, New York. January 1985. The report and inventory cards for the arsenal are filed as field records in the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress under HAER No. NY-1A.

Completion Report of Buildings Constructed by the Construction Division of the U.S. Army at Watervliet Arsenal, Watervliet, New York, May to December 1918. No pl.: no pub., n.d. Copy available in the Watervliet Arsenal Museum. Gives sources of construction material.

Kyle, Francis K. A History of Watervliet Arsenal. Watervliet, New York: Watervliet Arsenal, 1920. Quotes contemporary correspondence on the date of construction.

D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Records of the Office of the Chief of Ordnance, Record Group 156, and Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Record Group 77, Navy and Old Army Branch, National Archives, Washington, D.C. should be further investigated.

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E. Supplemental Material:

First Floor and Basement Plans, Fire Station, Building No. 22. No date. Watervliet Arsenal Engineering Division. Current floor plan of the building.

Prepared by: Barbara E. Hightower  
Historian  
MacDonald and Mack Partnership  
February 1985

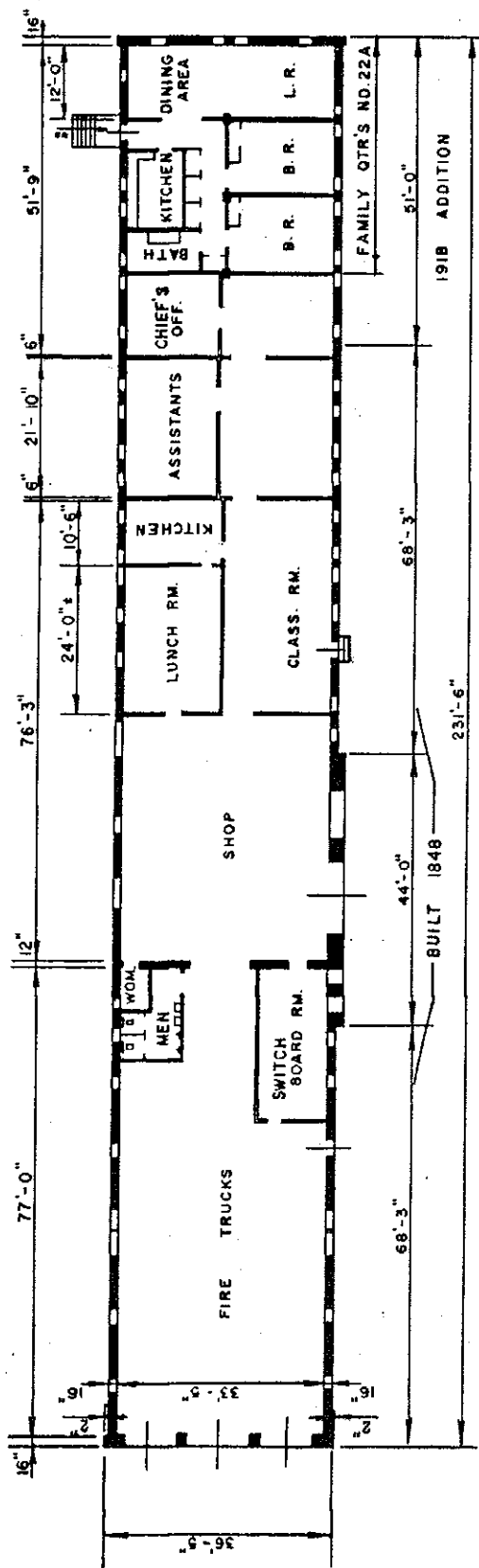
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was part of a program initiated through a memorandum of agreement between the National Park Service and the U.S. Department of the Army. Stanley H. Fried, Chief, Real Estate Branch of Headquarters DARCOM, and Dr. Robert J. Kapsch, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, were program directors. Sally Kress Tompkins of HABS/HAER was program manager, and Robie S. Lange of HABS/HAER was project manager. Under the direction of William A. Brenner, Building Technology Incorporated, Silver Spring, Maryland, acted as primary contractor, and MacDonald and Mack Partnership, Minneapolis, was a major subcontractor. The project included a survey of historic properties at Watervliet Arsenal, as well as preparation of an historic properties report and HABS/HAER documentation for 17 buildings. The survey, report, and documentation were completed by Barbara E. Hightower, historian, Minneapolis. The photographs were taken by Robert A. Ryan and J Ceronie of Dennett, Muessig, Ryan, and Associates, Ltd., Iowa City, Iowa. Drawings were produced by Gary M. Louris, Minneapolis.

7'-0" CLG. HT.

Floor plan of the vaulted room in the basement of the Old State House. The room is rectangular with a vaulted ceiling. The overall dimensions are 36' 6" by 18'. The plan shows a central area labeled 'VAULT' with a staircase leading up. There are several smaller rooms and corridors, with dimensions such as 18' 6" and 3' 6" indicated. A door is shown on the left side.

**BASEMENT**



FIRST FLOOR

**WATERVLIET ARSENAL**

WATERVLIET, N.Y.

Drown by: J.R.GANGEMI, A.E. Appd by:

1ST FL. & BASEMENT PLANS  
FIRE STATION  
BUILDING NO. 22

Scale: 1" = 30'-0" Date:

NET FLOOR AREA  
18,959  
Square feet

FLOOR CAPACITY  
BMT. 1000 LBS.  
1ST FL. 1000 + 50 LBS.  
PER SQUARE FOOT.